

**TRAFFORD COUNCIL**

**Report to:** Health Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
**Report for:** Information  
**Report of:** Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Equalities

**Report Title**

**The Council's role in tackling health inequalities associated with the social determinants of health**

**Summary**

This report addresses the question of how the Council plays a role in reducing health inequalities in Trafford through its influence on the wider determinants of health, with a particular focus on the role of employment.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Report be noted

**Background**

It is widely recognised that the social determinants of health have a greater impact on health and wellbeing than medical care. Council services therefore have a major impact on health and the policies and actions of the Council have a major role in reducing health inequalities.

The Council (and its partners) have the opportunity to address inequalities in three specific areas of local government:

- In its role as an employer, commissioner of services and through links with local businesses
- In its role as a provider of welfare and a source of benefits advice

- In its role as a gateway to securing housing for residents including homeless residents

It is proposed that each area will be scrutinised separately at successive meetings of Health Scrutiny Committee (September 2021, November 2021 and January 2022). Accordingly this current report addresses issues connected with Employment, Commissioning and Business.

There are a number of ways in which the Council influences these activities; these are outlined below within the principal areas of work.

### **The Role of Employment**

It is widely understood that the type of work undertaken or the lack of access to work, education or training contributes to health inequality.

Employment is a primary determinant of health, impacting both directly and indirectly on the individual, their families and communities. Being in work is good for health if it is good work i.e. a fair, safe and secure job with decent pay, good working hours and conditions, supportive management and opportunities for training and development<sup>1</sup>. Increasing access to good work leads to better health and, in turn, boosts productivity and prosperity across the population. Evidence also suggests that employers with a more diverse workforce perform better financially<sup>2</sup>.

According to the Annual Population survey (2020) Trafford has 78.4% of the working age population in employment (compared to 75.7% in England) with slightly more men (80.5%) than women (76.3%) in employment.

### **Employment & Health**

57.1% of people of working age with health conditions or illnesses lasting more than 12 months are in employment. This is reduced when categorised by different types of disability/ illness:-

- 42% of people with disabilities connected with arms, legs, hands, feet, back or neck in employment
- 22.4% of people with difficulty in hearing or seeing
- 54.5% of people with blood or circulatory conditions, stomach, liver, kidney or digestive problems , diabetes
- 56.9% of people with depression, learning problems, mental problems and nervous disorders
- 57.6% of people with skin conditions , epilepsy; other progressive illnesses and other health problems

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<sup>1</sup> Social capital in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Public Health England. Health Matters: Health and work. 2019.

This data is backed by the findings of the Working Well Work and Health programme<sup>3</sup> which found that out of the 10,000 people on the programme across Greater Manchester:-

- 56% reported a health condition or disability that could affect their ability to get a job
- 41% of clients have a physical health condition and 34% have a mental health condition

The gap in employment rate between the overall employment rate and those with a long term health condition is 6.4% in Trafford (significantly better than the national average), for those with a learning disability is 68% (in line with the national average), and for those in contact with secondary mental health services is 69% (in line with the national average).

In considering the role that the Council itself has as a major employer the following employment patterns for the Trafford Council Workforce emerge:

Male – 24%

Female – 76%

BAME – 13.34%\*

White – 86.66%\*

Consider themselves as having a disability – 6.19%\*

Don't consider themselves as having a disability – 93.81%\*

\*This is based on those employees for whom the Council hold this data.

### Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

The latest official 16-18 NEET data is to end of July (last column) and is below:

| 2021-22            |              | Apr   | May   | Jun   | Jul   |
|--------------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Totals</b>      | Cohort Size  | 5592  | 5587  | 5593  | 5588  |
|                    | EET          | 5319  | 5291  | 5292  | 5294  |
|                    | PIL          |       |       |       |       |
|                    | NEET         | 136   | 133   | 132   | 129   |
|                    | Unknown      | 137   | 163   | 169   | 165   |
|                    | NEET+Unknown | 273   | 296   | 301   | 294   |
| <b>Percentages</b> | NEET         | 2.43  | 2.38  | 2.36  | 2.31  |
|                    | Unknown      | 2.45  | 2.92  | 3.02  | 2.95  |
|                    | NEET+Unknown | 4.88  | 5.30  | 5.38  | 5.26  |
|                    | PIL          | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  |
|                    | EET          | 95.12 | 94.70 | 94.62 | 94.74 |
|                    | RPA Y12      | 97.00 | 97.00 | 97.00 | 97.30 |
|                    | RPA Y13      | 91.10 | 91.00 | 90.90 | 91.00 |

<sup>3</sup> Working Well Annual report 2020 [working-well-work-and-health-programme-2020-annual-report.pdf](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/working-well-work-and-health-programme-2020-annual-report.pdf)  
([greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk))

In comparison July last year's NEET was 119 so there has been around a 9% increase in NEET over the year.

The biggest predictor of NEET is young people who were eligible for free school meals, which signals a strong link to poverty. There are certain geographical areas with generally higher NEET rates in Trafford (notably Partington and Old Trafford) and over-represented groups are young people with SEND and specific BAME groups (Black and White Caribbean young people). The pandemic has created significant challenges to young peoples' employment and career prospects. There was a 35% reduction in apprenticeships over the last year, and although employment is now picking up there remains a concern that young people may have missed out on their first choice career route and face increased difficulties accessing the job market..

### **The Role of Gender in Employment & Pay**

In 2020 there was a gender pay gap within the Council of 9.75% (mean) and 15.46% (median), both in favour of male employees. As the Council has a robust job evaluation scheme and process, the gender pay gap isn't affected by equal pay, which it will be in some organisations.

There are a number of influencing factors which combine and contribute to the Council's pay gap as follows.

- Occupational segregation, i.e. the fact that some types of job are more traditionally undertaken by females and some by males. The workforce is predominantly female and there are a disproportionate number of roles on the lower pay bands that in British society traditionally tend to be undertaken by women as opposed to men (catering, cleaning and passenger assistants attached to schools, care assistants and support workers). If these groups are removed the gap reduces to 5.07% (mean) and 10.25% (median).
- The fact that the Council employs a lot of part-time roles in Trafford (49% of posts) which attract females and evidence shows that part-time roles tend to be on lower pay grades than full-time roles. When part-time roles are looked at the gender pay gap is positive for women as the mean is -0.98% and the median gap is -1.91%. For full-time employees the gender pay gap is 2.49% (mean) and 9.30% (median).
- The gender composition of our workforce which is 75% female and 25% male.
- The Council has an ageing workforce and evidence shows that the gender pay gap widens above age 40 (73% of our workforce is over 40).

Due to the reasons for the Council's gender pay gap there may only be a certain level of scope to reduce it, and Officers are working to identify effective actions that the Council can take to improve the recruitment and progression of women and close our gender pay gap.

## **Targeted improvements to employment amongst specific groups**

The Council delivers support into employment through the Trafford Pledge, an employment initiative where we work with local employers who commit to supporting local people into employment.

The Trafford Pledge matches local residents with local opportunities in particular those residents who are disadvantaged in the labour market. Priority groups include:-

- Care leavers (looked after young people leaving the care system)
- Young people who are NEET (Not Engaged in Education, Employment or Training)
- Ex-armed forces
- People with a health condition or disability
- People on a supported employment programme (such as Working Well, Talentmatch, Motiv8)
- People with complex needs
- Older people
- Ex- offenders
- Homeless people

The Trafford Pledge is currently supporting over 20 businesses to recruit locally, to date the Trafford Pledge has supported over 1285 local residents into employment

Specific initiatives are also identified for the current year in the Inclusive Economic Recovery Plan and the Trafford Employment, Skills and Enterprise (TEES) plans including:-

### Support to people aged 50+

There are more people aged 50+ currently out of work in Trafford than there are young people aged 16-25 years. We are working with the Centre for Ageing Better and GMCA to pilot new ways to support people aged 50 years and over into employment and are seeking funding to test out a concept using group coaching, mentoring, paid work placements and apprenticeship grants for older people to incentivise the take up from local employers.

### Support for people with disabilities

- We are working with DWP to promote the take up of disability confident status to local employers and encourage disability friendly workplaces
- We work through TEES partners to identify barriers for disabled residents and those with learning disabilities. For example we have applied for internal Covid funding to work with SEND young people who are NEET and may have disabilities as well, to encourage them to engage with employment support programmes such as Kickstart and NEET provision.

### Guaranteed interview scheme

We have guaranteed interview schemes in place for those with a disability, care leavers and ex-services personnel. This means that where individuals applying for a post identify as one of more of these, they will be interviewed if they meet the essential criteria for the post.

### **Support for young people aged 16-25 years**

We established the Trafford Pledge Youth Employment Task Force late in 2020 to tackle youth unemployment in Trafford.

The Board has been coordinating the take up of DWP's Kickstart programme in Trafford.

The Kickstart Scheme is a £2 billion fund to create hundreds of thousands of high quality 6-month work placements for young people (16-24 years old) who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. The young persons' wages, NI and pension contributions throughout the placement will be covered by the government. Trafford Council were successful in its application to offer up to 35 internal/external placements in January 2021.

These placements must not replace existing or planned vacancies or cause existing employees or contractors to lose their employment. The young people are being identified by their job centre work coach who will also offer support throughout their placement.

We have currently recruited 9 internal Kick Start placements on our first cohort and another 3 starting in early September. We are currently recruiting to our third and final cohort which is due to start in October 2021, of which there are 14 internal placements available.

Each young person has access to dedicated employment and skills support which includes monthly half day workshops which focus on developing key employability skills such as team working, time management, customer services and interview preparation.

Further support is available via regular online learning resources and a Kickstart co-ordinator who works with them on individual career aspirations. All the young people are being actively encouraged to undertake the IDEA Bronze award in addition to this support package to increase their employability skills. The IDEA is the modern day take on the Duke of Edinburgh award with a focus on digital and employability skills.

### **Other Initiatives for Young People**

T Levels are an alternative to A-levels, apprenticeships and other 16 to 19 courses. They are equivalent to 3 A levels. T Levels focus on developing vocational skills that will support students to access skilled employment, higher study or apprenticeships. Each T Level includes attendance at college for 2 academic years and an in-depth industry placement that lasts at least 45 days. Trafford College will be delivering 3 T-levels from September 2021: Building Services Engineering, Digital Support Services: Digital Infrastructure, Childcare & Education. We have been working with

Trafford College for over 12 months looking at how we can support with the industry placements and are planning to offer a variety of T-level placements starting in January 2022 across the directorates.

Mentoring Programme – We are working in partnership with Trafford College to provide mentoring support to students on their “college ready programme” this programme is designed for young people that could be considered vulnerable for a range of reasons and may be at risk of not complete their college course. We will be upskilling a cohort of internal mentors who will offer their services and support to students on this programme. Mentors will be trained in the principles of mentoring, mentoring for personal and social development and mentoring vulnerable people to equip them with the skills to support this programme and the young people.

External Apprenticeship Offer – The Council currently recruits to entry level apprenticeship opportunities via its EPIC Apprenticeship programme. This enables managers to bring in new employees for a fixed period whilst an apprenticeship is undertaken. We have supported 35 number of apprentices since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 with 15 apprentices successfully securing permanent employment at the Council. At present apprentices are paid minimum wage dependent on their age.

The Council are currently undertaking a review of our external apprenticeship offer with the intent to make recommendations to increase the uptake and retention of our entry level apprentices. We want to ensure that we maximise the opportunity for the apprentice to gain permanent employment upon successful completion of their apprenticeship and have a line of sight to a career path.

Internal Apprenticeship Offer – We currently offer all Trafford Council employees the opportunity to undertake an Upskill apprenticeship (subject to meeting certain criteria). This offer helps to support any learning opportunities identified as part of employee bi-annual check-ins. There are currently over 500 different apprenticeships available and since the start of the apprenticeship levy we have supported near 300 employers to upskill via this route, 13 of these apprentices have been undertaken by 16-25 year olds. Our most successful apprenticeship routes to date are the Social Work Degree level 6, the LEAP into Leadership level 3 and the Coaching Professional level 5.

## **Supporting disabled people into employment**

Internal Supported Internships - We are offering 2 supported internship placements starting in September 2021 in our Library Services. These placements are part of the United Response offer for students at Loreto College. The placements are part of a 5 placements being offered by United Response in partnership with UA92 and Trafford College. Supported internships give young people with learning disabilities or autism the opportunity to gain work experience in real life work environments. The placements last the length of a standard school term and include support from a work coach for the young person to gain skills and experience which will help them to gain employment.

Disability Schemes. We are working with DWP to promote the take-up of the Disability Confident scheme to local employers by sending out information, helping organise campaigns and events and raising this in discussions with all new employers that we work with.

We are planning to use some of the Top Up funding through the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) 2021 to support young people including those with physical and learning disabilities to access employment.

Young people have been severely affected by the Covid pandemic due to their high representation in sectors such as hospitality and leisure, and companies postponing recruitment. The government has established the Kickstart Scheme to provide funding to create new jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment. Employers of any size can apply for funding for 100% of national minimum wage (or national living wage depending on age of person) for 25hrs per week for a total of 6months.

With this mechanism to support young people in place via Kickstart, it is proposed to provide a top-up grant to employers of 100% national minimum wage (or national living wage) for an additional 6mths to keep a young person on work placement for 1yr in total.

To support the Health and social care sector which is facing chronic shortages of staff (exacerbated by Brexit), it is proposed that the 6 month top-up grant to employers to keep a young person on work placement for 1yr in total is doubled.

In addition, to support young people with learning and physical disabilities to access opportunities to enter the workforce, it is proposed that the 6 month top-up grant to employers is doubled for those providing work placements for these young people.

- [Est. Budget - c£155k<sup>4</sup> (20 young people into work placements)]

The Kickstart scheme is only available to young people claiming Universal Credit (UC) which can therefore exclude young people (mainly 16-18 yr olds) in differing circumstances and who are not claiming/eligible for U.C. i.e. living at home. It is therefore proposed to provide a grant to employers providing work placements for these young people.

- [Est. Budget - c£25,000<sup>5</sup> (10 young people into placements)]

### **Initiatives to support women with childcare/caring responsibilities to gain employment**

49% of Council posts are part-time and a significant number of these are term time as well and within school hours, particularly posts attached to schools. These roles

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<sup>4</sup> Budget based on averages for national minimum wage and national living wage

<sup>5</sup> Budget based on national minimum wage only due to age group



tend to fit with the lives of those who have caring responsibilities, often attractive to women.

We have a good provision of support for staff with caring responsibilities, with resources detailed on a dedicated Carers' intranet page and a Carers' support group which is well established.

As part of a government pilot programme ('Caring, Living, Working') which had the aim of supporting individuals returning to work after taking a break due to caring responsibilities, in February 2020 the Council hosted a visit by 13 'Returners'. The visit incorporated a tour of TTH, a presentation of our recruitment processes, highlighted the flexible working options and support which the Council offers and what 'returners' could expect as carers if they worked for the Council. A member of our Carers Support Group also shared her very honest experience of being a long term carer and her experience of working for Trafford Council. The participants engaged fully in the visit by sharing their mixed backgrounds and experiences and we received some extremely positive comments from participants.

### **Access to childcare across the borough**

Trafford has a strong early education and childcare market with a good mix of early years providers across all neighbourhoods offering parents and carers a range of options to suit their needs. There are 304 registered early education settings, comprising 211 childminders and 93 early years group settings. In addition to this, 57 schools have nursery classes and two of these offer 2 year old provision. There are also nursery assessment places available in three of the primary special schools providing high quality provision to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Quality of early years provision is high with 98% childminders graded Good or Outstanding compared to 96% nationally and 98% of group settings graded at Good or Outstanding which is compared to 97% nationally.

Take up of early education remains consistently high with 3 and 4 year take up at just under 100% placing Trafford 7th nationally in the year 2019/2020. Take up of the universal and extended offer remains broadly constant, but the number of places funded across the sector has decreased, linked to a declining birth rate which follows the national trend. This will continue to be closely monitored.

The 2 year education entitlement is available to families based on economic criteria. Take up of the 2 year education places has decreased slightly to 88% in the Spring Term 2021 however this increased to 97% in the Summer Term and is still significantly higher than the national average with Trafford currently placed 1st compared to statistical neighbours and 3rd nationally out of 151 other local authorities.

There are no known sufficiency issues resulting in children being unable to access an early education place.

One particular concern that has been well documented nationally and is becoming more evident in Trafford is the challenges with recruitment and retention of qualified

early years practitioners. This has been exacerbated by the pandemic and is reflected across a number of sectors. Strategies will be required to address this to support longer term planning.

### **Commissioning strategy and the impact of the social determinants of health**

In our role as commissioner of services we strive to design services to meet the needs of specific groups at risk of poorer health outcomes.

For example, the livewell behaviour change services have targeted offers to support those at greatest risk to improve their health: people with learning disabilities, older people, people from ethnic minorities, plus the weight management offer includes a service specifically targeted at men.

In commissioning our livewell services we considered the groups within our population who were at greatest health risk and faced barriers to accessing behaviour change services, and commissioned services specifically to assist them - such as the deaf community/learning disabilities/ethnic minorities/areas of deprivation. All of these services address the social determinants of health and can support people to access advice on welfare/benefits/finance/employment/education in a holistic manner.

With our e-cigarette service, instead of universal provision we target subgroups that are more likely to smoke and find it more difficult to quit, including manual workers, people in social housing, people with mental health needs.

Our sexual health commissioning focuses on communities and groups who are more adversely affected- so providing young people specific services, clinics in areas with more sexual health needs and deprivation Old Trafford/Partington. There is also specific work in Old Trafford with black African community around late diagnosis of HIV.

Domestic abuse services- we are looking to target underrepresented groups, for example we have just commissioned a male victims worker and there is specific work with people with mental health needs, specific culturally appropriate safe housing/staff with community language abilities. We are currently undertaking a full needs assessment which is identifying what the gaps are.

Within the arena of social care, the main commissioning strategy that is currently in development is the **Learning Disability strategy**. The Learning Disability Transformation Group is keen to make sure people with a Learning Disability enjoy the best possible health and recognises the importance of the social determinants of health in its wide-ranging strategy. Examples of what it has committed to (through 4 determinants of health) are given below.

**Social and Community Context:** The group is keen to increase levels of user engagement, recognising that building capacity is an effective way of supporting good health. We are in the process of setting up a self-advocacy group as a first step at better empowering people to speak up and to be involved in decision making. We also plan an LD Forum and this will assist us in having a mandate when working with partners to improve their offer/services for those with an LD.

**Neighbourhood and the Built Environment** – we've a commitment to the development of an accommodation strategy which will support us in ensuring people are able to live as independently as possible in the community. We've also made a number of commitments on ensuring people feel safe in the community including an increase in the number of safe places including shops and those visited during the night time economy. On recognising how important it is for people to be able to travel safely, we'll be setting up a group of travel champions as well as exploring training through an independent travel training scheme.

**Employment and Education:** we're really keen to improve levels of employment amongst those with an LD. We work closely with United Response (Supported Employment); and with Day Services some of whom do some great work in supporting people into jobs or in getting them closer to work. We've committed to a review of our Day Services and one opportunity is a pathway between Day Services and our supported employment partners.

**Health** – the LD Group is really keen to improve current figures on annual health checks and on cancer screening; as well as on oral health and other areas. It has set some challenging targets for improvement.

Many of these areas are interlinked. For instance on supporting people into training or employment the ability to travel safely will be important; it's likely through the planned LD forum that we'll work with local colleges (amongst other partners) to ensure they offer the best possible access for those with an LD; ensuring people are able to advocate for themselves will improve confidence levels and support access to work. So we recognise the need to work on much of the above concurrently.

In addition to the above, there are a number of nationally and GM funded employment support programmes that are focussed on supporting people with specific health conditions. These programmes are being delivered across Trafford as well as the rest of GM. They include: -

#### Working Well Work and Health Programme

Greater Manchester launched its Working Well (Work and Health Programme) in January 2018. The programme aims to support the long term unemployed and disabled people into sustainable employment across the city-region.

The programme offers over 200 different of health interventions through a keyworker based delivery model. The programme brings together expertise and local knowledge to include integrated health, skills and employment support, and offers all participants individually tailored and personalised support from their own dedicated key worker to support them on their journey back to work.

An Integration Coordinator in each of the ten boroughs across the region works closely with Local Authority leads and key partners to understand the needs of participants, and maintain and create new partnerships with local providers or specialist organisations to ensure the right support is available at the right time.

#### Work and Health Programme Job Entry: Targeted Support (JETS)

As part of the devolved Work and Health programme, Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) began taking referrals from October 2020, and will run until March 2021, supporting 13,000 Greater Manchester residents who have been claiming benefits for over 3 months within this time. The service is aimed at residents who have been unemployed for 13 weeks and are in receipt of benefits.

### Working Well Early Help Programme

GMCA and the GM Health and Social Care Partnership work together to co-develop and commission the Working Well (Early Help) programme.

The purpose of the Early Help programme is to design and test an early intervention support system geared to support and advise individuals (with employment with health conditions or disabilities) who are at risk of falling out of work, or are newly unemployed due to their health complications and/or disabilities.

The programme went live in March 2019 and is delivered by MAXIMUS (UK) across all 10 localities. This is:-

- A health-led model focussed on addressing health conditions and wider social determinants of health to enable individuals to move back into work.
- The focus on early intervention to facilitate a quicker return to work and reduce the risk of long-term unemployment. The Flexible Test and Learn approach allowed the programme to respond to the newly unemployed who have been impacted by Covid-19 and poor health.
- Rapid access to services (CBT and physiotherapy) for which there are long waiting times on the NHS.
- Support for both SME employers and employees including advice and confidence building for programme participants to negotiate a return to work. The flexibility within the programme allowed for support to businesses impacted by Covid-19, such as care and the night time economy, to be given.
- A direct pathway for participating GP practices to refer in patients who are in receipt of a Fit Note to support a return to work. In Trafford GPs in the Sale area are participating in the programme led by Dr Deborah Pole.

### Specialist Employment Service

The programme seeks to address the inequalities in employment rates for people with disabilities. Amongst these, people with learning disabilities and people with severe mental illness have the lowest employment rates. The employment rate of autistic adults is also low.

The SES contract has two strands, *Supported Employment*, which provides employment support for people with a learning disability and/or autism, and *Individual Placement and Support*, which provides employment support to people with a severe mental illness. The offer is an evidence-based model designed to support people with complex disabilities and health needs access and sustain paid work in the open labour market.

WW SES started in March 2020 and will provide access to up to an additional 1,180 participants to specialist employment support by March 2023.

The model is a shift away from a 'train and place' model that focuses on job readiness, to a 'place then train' one that focuses on engagement with employers to make the job possible. Employer engagement and working with employers are critical components of Supported Employment and Individual Placement and Support models.

### Enterprising You

Enterprising You is a new £10m test and learn pilot programme pilot to support Greater Manchester residents who are self-employed or working within the gig economy. Funded by the Department for Education, it is the only programme in England to support those working in the gig economy. Launched in February 2020, the programme will run to March 2022, supporting up to 2,500 people over its lifetime. It aims to support people who are self-employed to develop and sustain their business, increase their skills levels and raise their income potential. The programme is delivered by the Growth Company, in partnership with People Plus.

For individuals accessing the programme, the service provides tailored support from a business coach, alongside access to specialist advice and guidance, which includes; help with managing personal finances, accessing legal advice, health and wellbeing support, careers advice and access to a peer-mentoring scheme. During the pandemic the programme has very much focussed on support mental wellbeing of individuals on the programme.

### Restart

The Restart programme funded through DWP will provide intensive and tailored support to over 1 million unemployed people and help them find work in England and Wales, with approximately £400 million investment in 2021-22.

The contract value in Greater Manchester is £172.4m. Restart aims to support 86,200 individuals in Greater Manchester over a three-year period from summer 2021 (with an option to extend referrals by up to a further 24 months). It is being delivered by Ingeus and contract delivery in Trafford has been sub-contracted to the Growth Company. It is aimed at people who have become unemployed during the pandemic and is targeted at Universal Credit Claimants who have been unemployed for at least 12 months.

### **The Council's Role in bringing health services to workplaces**

The Council promotes Health and Wellbeing for all colleagues. We have a range of resources available on our [intranet](#) and regularly add to and promote these through corporate communication to all colleagues.

We have revised our "check in" process to ensure that conversations around Health and Wellbeing are front and centre of discussions, in addition to this we have training for managers and colleagues on the check in process alongside a specific Health and Wellbeing module as part of our EPIC manager training programme.

We have a range of support services available to colleagues such as Occupational Health Service, access to Physiotherapy an Employee Assistance Programme and a Coaching for Wellbeing programme.

Mental Health support particularly for our male colleagues continues to form an important aspect of our #EPIC You Wellbeing Strategy.

Mental Health First Aiders are available to provide valuable support and signposting to relevant men's mental health support services. Our Mental Health First Aid Team includes male colleagues who may be a preferred source of contact for men within our workforce to discuss mental wellbeing issues.

Those male Mental Health First Aiders also regularly hold men only 'Tea and Talk' sessions as part of the monthly opportunity for staff to chat to and support each other and take some time away from the pressures of work and home life.

A 'How are you?' Mental Health support 'button' is available on our intranet home page provides quick access to links, guides and support. This includes male specific support services. One of those services Andy's Man Club, who provide non-judgemental talking groups for men who are experiencing mental health issues, provided a presentation to a number of our Mental Health First Aiders to facilitate the signposting of male colleagues to this support if required.

Previously we have run an innovative Mental Health Fitness programme 'Offload' on a number of occasions. Delivered in association with Rugby League Cares, the programme, consisting of a number of sessions, let colleagues hear personal stories from professional male sports players about how they have dealt with a range of mental health issues and everyday life stresses. Offload was well received and attended by our workforce. Although opened up to all staff, the emphasis of the programme is towards men's mental health. Offload continues to be delivered regionally and as such there is opportunity to engage further with the programme in the future.

As part of the Trafford Council/CCG annual Health and Wellbeing Week 2020, Public Health colleagues provided the opportunity for mini health checks for our workforce. This included looking at healthy weight, blood pressure and discussion around lifestyle factors such as smoking, alcohol, physical activity and signposting to mental wellbeing services. 106 Council staff (both male and female) participated in the health checks. Where any lifestyle issues were identified that may benefit from further intervention, colleagues were signposted to support services or recommended to see their GP for further advice. This was an excellent early intervention activity to help colleagues take steps improve their health and wellbeing.

Commissioned Public Health providers are supported to link into local workplaces in order to provide direct engagement to groups that may be less likely to access community-based services.

The outbreak management and vaccination support we have provided to workplaces during the pandemic gives us an excellent foundation on which to build more health promotion initiatives in these settings.

A good example of this is provided by the health promotion initiatives now being delivered in collaboration with Kellogg's.

In March 2021 links were established with the Specialist Occupational Health Nurse Practitioner within the Kellogg's factory in Trafford, one of Trafford largest employers. Kellogg's has a total employee population of 375, 87% of whom are male. In addition to this they work with partner organisations such as a Mitie who have over 80 employee connected to the factory and are 84% male.

There have been three main bodies of work associated with this organisation to make health improvements within the employee population:

1. **HIV Awareness** - In May 2021 a pilot was developed through the PaSH partnership. PaSH is a collaboration between BHA for Equality, George House Trust, and the LGBT Foundation. The partnership delivers a programme of interventions to meet the needs of people newly diagnosed with HIV, living longer term with HIV or at greatest risk of acquiring HIV.

The pilot set out to provide a combination of HIV prevention messages leading to an increase in employee's knowledge and understanding of HIV. In addition, it aims to support the uptake of HIV testing via the distribution and voluntary access of SH24 offline HIV testing postal kits.

2. **Smoking Cessation** - During the no Smoking day in March tools, quick kits advertisements and awareness raising of Trafford's E-cigarette offer was provided to Kellogg's. This included videos and posters being used in the factories canteen and quit kits being provided to the Nurse Practitioner to be distributed to those interested. This level of support has continued into the Make Smoking History campaign period in August and September.
3. **Weight Management** - Early this year our weight management providers including Foundation 92 and Slimming World delivered services on site to support Kellogg's employees. Foundation 92 working with Kellogg's to deliver the FitFans programme to male employees on site, which focused on improving the fitness of men through activities such as football.

### **Progress towards implementation of a living wage and living hours across the borough**

Given the link between poverty and health, wage programmes are an important tool for reducing local inequalities.

The Council pays the Real Living Wage within the Authority for our directly employed workforce. Due to the delay with our pay award negotiations this year, we currently have some staff on our lowest scale point which equates to £9.44 per hour, which is just under the Real Living Wage rate of £9.50. However when the pay award is agreed for 2021/22, the rate will increase above the Real Living Wage with

backdating of pay to 1<sup>st</sup> April (the new RLW is communicated each November and organisations are expected to adopt it by May of the following year).

We have been exploring Real Living Wage Accreditation – which as well as adopting for our directly employed workforce, means a commitment to applying the rate to the workforce in our commissioned services, schools and subsidiaries. A paper on this is currently being considered by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Within the Council we have roles on many different hours per week and for some service this is determined by their delivery model. For example many roles attached to our schools are on a low number of part-time hours – which tends to suit attract individuals who want a lower work time commitment. However where staff are looking for more hours this can often be accommodated by taking on more than one part-time role – we have around a hundred staff who are multi-post holders).

### **Conclusion**

As a Council we have many opportunities to address local health inequalities in our roles as an employer and commissioner. Employment is a key determinant of health and of inequalities and the initiatives outlined in this report illustrate how the Council is working with partners to improve economic circumstances and other social determinants of health for our population. With the impact of the pandemic on widening health inequalities we recognise the need to do more, as part of our recovery from covid-19, to ensure people in Trafford have access to fair, safe and secure jobs with decent pay, good working hours and conditions, supportive management and opportunities for training and development.

Key strategic levers we are using to push forward this agenda include our Poverty and Equalities strategies, as well as the development of neighbourhood working with a focus on prevention and creating inclusive and thriving economies.

We want to develop a Health in all Policies approach in Trafford, whereby we systematically and explicitly take health considerations into account across policy areas - an approach that looks for synergies between health and other core objectives, and aims to reduce local inequalities.